

CHRONICLE-UNION.

BRIDGEPORT, DECEMBER 24, 1892.

LOCAL INTELLIGENCE.

Personal.

Harvey Boone came over from Bodie by the regular road on Wednesday.

Thos. Coyne was in from Landy the first of the week.

Thos. Coyne was over from Landy and returned on Tuesday with a ton of flour for the hungry Landyites.

Sheriff Cody will start on Monday for Stockton, and will be accompanied by ex-Treasurer E. B. Tishum, who goes to the Asylum for treatment.

W. F. Barnes, of Antelope, came up from the Valley yesterday.

Harvey Boone, wife and child, returned to Bodie yesterday, via the Goat Ranch.

Mrs. Ann Summers returned home this week.

We wish all a Merry Christmas.

YOUR PATIENT.—This is a very patient community, to put up with such mail carrying, without a remonstrance to the Government. If there was ever a community imposed upon in the matter of its mail contracts, Bodie and Bridgeport are the ones. The mails of these two places are carried to suit the pleasure of those carrying them, and not in the interest of the people. The only decent mail service in the county is that done by Burkham, on the Landy route, and by Gelatt, on the Antelope and Carson routes, who make their regular trips. There is no excuse for our not having our mails daily; as it is, we are getting about two mails a week, when Landy gets her daily mail, and everybody knows that is a worse winter road than the Bodie and Bridgeport one. If the Postmaster do their duty in reporting the short-comings of contractors, the contractor's pay will be mightily light this winter.

THE MAILS.—On Tuesday night, about 10:30, the stage from Bodie arrived here with the San Francisco mails of the 12th, 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th and 17th. The stage started out from Bodie, but the snow was so deep on Buckner Flat the horses could not get through, so the back track was taken and the stage had to come by way of Fletcher's and add Sweetwater—the horsehoe route. It also brought a large lot of express matter, much to the delight of our people, who feared they would come short of their Christmas presents.

The stage left here on Wednesday morning by the Sweetwater road. It should have been back on Thursday afternoon with the mail, but here it is Saturday and not a sign of a mail yet. There is no excuse for this, as the weather and roads were good.

A test vote in the South Carolina House showed a majority of 38 in favor of prohibition.

CHANGE OF BASE.—Our old friend, W. H. Russell, has resigned as Superintendent of the Little Emily Mining Co., of Benton, and has been appointed Superintendent of the Reed Mines Co. Co., at Old Diggings, Shasta county, where he is now residing. It is said to be a good mine, and Mr. Russell has our best wishes in his new enterprise.

The Little Emily mine, at Benton, is now under the Superintendency of John A. Wilson, late of Hailey, Idaho. Mr. Wilson is said to be a thorough miner, and a very pleasant gentleman, and we trust he will find his change of base an agreeable one.

READ 'EM.—We call the attention of our readers, particularly in Mono county, to the advertisement on this page, "Notice of Proposed Government Reservation." As the proposed Reservation will take in lands in Mono county, B. F. Allen, Special Agent of the General Land Office, and whose address is Visalia, Cal., desires that all parties having objections to the boundaries of the proposed reservation, or are in favor of them, submit their views in regard to it, either by petition or otherwise, so that the Interior Department may not understand in the premises.

CHRISTMAS TREE.—The Christmas Tree is in place in Bryant's Hall and ready for the expected harvest. A Committee will be at the Hall this afternoon to receive the presents. The exercises will be very brief, as no one—particularly those who know they will receive presents, wants to listen to a long program on such an occasion, and it is always hard work to keep the youngsters quiet while the literary exercises are going on. After the presents are distributed the children will have an opportunity to dance and have all the fun they can bear up under.

The Festival has been postponed till Monday evening at 7 o'clock, sharp, so as not to interfere with the Ball.

A MINE CONTRACT.—Sheriff Cody has let a contract to Harry Trevelyan to sink a combination shaft on the Rattlesnake and South Extension to a depth of 300 feet and a 15-foot camp. It will be a double-compartment shaft, and to be finished in 3 months. This is a promising mine, several thousand dollars having been taken out while merely doing assessment work. Sheriff Cody will have a better position superintending his Rattlesnake, than being Tax Collector at \$300 a year.

A TRAVEL.—A travel set in on Thursday, making a good landed on the little snow patches about town. If we cannot have enough snow for sleighing, we don't want any, so we are glad to get rid of the few patches on our streets.

A POSTAL REFORM.

As the Democratic Party, under Cleveland, has been plying the "Reform Party," one of the first "reforms" that party, now about to take the reins of Government again, should direct its attention, is the manner of letting mail contracts. It has been the custom ever since we have had a Postal Department, to let contracts for carrying the mails to parties who live thousands of miles away from the routes over which the mails are to be transported. These contractors as a general thing, know nothing of the country through which they are to carry the mails, nor do they wish to, as they have a "pull" in Washington, and have no trouble in getting all the contracts they can make money out of by sub-letting them. After these contractors receive a contract they, in turn, invite bids to carry out the contracts they have secured, and there are men in almost every community, who are always anxious to get a government contract—even a second handed one, and they usually contract to carry the mails at a price they cannot afford to do the work for, and the consequences in the people have to suffer through their foolish contracts. The Government pays on their original contract sufficient to enable the contractor to do his duty faithfully, but instead of doing it, he pockets about two-thirds of the contract price, and finds some poor devil in outlying districts to try to do the work for whatever pittance the principal contractor sees fit to allow him. The Hawthorne, Nev., and Bridgeport mail routes is a fair sample of the manner these mail contractors are manipulated. This contract is held by a Salt Lake man, who sublet it to a Hawthorne man, who runs the road as far as Bodie, and sublets the balance of the route to Bridgeport at a price he could not run it himself at, and knows very well that no one else can, and does the work as it should be done; and this is the way mail contracts are managed throughout this coast.

Congress should make a thorough revision of the manner of letting mail contracts, to the end, that no contract shall be given to a contractor who does not reside in the district wherein the mail, which he has a contract to carry, is delivered. And no contractor should be allowed to sublet a contract, but should be compelled to carry out his contract under his own supervision, and be held strictly to the provisions of his agreement, and in no other way can the American people expect to have their mails carried and delivered with safety and promptness. The member of Congress who will introduce a bill looking to this reform in the letting of mail contracts will receive the plaudits of the American people. A man living in Maine, Alabama, Salt Lake, or any other place outside of California, has no business to take a mail contract in California, of which State he knows nothing. Contractors should not only be responsible to the Government, but they should be responsible, in a measure, to the people they are serving.

RAIN.—A rain storm set in about daylight yesterday morning, and continued, with now and then an intermission until about 2 o'clock in the afternoon when it set in for a soaking downpour. It has rained very heavily from that time, accompanied by a high wind most of the time. The town is all afloat, and at this writing, 11 A. M., there is no prospect of a let-up in the downpour.

SUBPOENAED BY COAL GAS.—Captain B. F. Miller, and wife, parents of Ben. H. Miller, formerly County Clerk of Mono county, were found dead in their room at Newport, Penn., on the 6th, having been suffocated by coal gas. Mrs. Miller, and a young son, visited Ben. at Bridgeport a few years ago, and made many warm friends here who will be saddened to hear of her sudden departure.

CHRISTMAS BALL.—There will be a Christmas Ball on Monday evening at Bryant's Hall, where the elderly portion of our community can have their Christmas fun. The grand march will be played at 9 o'clock sharp, and all are earnestly requested to be in line at that time. Good music will be in attendance.

MARRIED.—On Thursday evening, at the residence of Mrs. Ida Kinney, Justice Thos. Fales married Mrs. Kinney to George H. Damp, formerly of Bodie. Only a few intimate friends were present. They left next morning for San Francisco, by Gelatt's, Carson stage, for a short bridal trip.

NO SCHOOL.—Next week will be a Holiday vacation for our school, and we presume the schools all over the county will have the same.

If the storm continues till night, the Tree festival should be postponed. Our streets are rivers at this writing.

CHRISTMAS DINNER at 5 o'clock to-morrow afternoon, at the Allen House.

FREE weather for lucky roofs, and amia, his housewires.

The people of Nevada do not seem to know when the Legislature is to meet. The Carson Tribune says it should meet on the 15th of January, the Reno Journal says the 17th, and the Hawthorne Bulletin says the 16th. The Silver question has completely demoralized the average Nevada.

SALE.—Bodie, 23 December 23, by Justice Thomas Fales, George H. Damp to Mrs. Ida Kinney.

UNDER THE AMERICAN FLAG.

When the Indian line steamship City of New York steamed down the Narrows yesterday morning it was her farewell appearance in this port with the English flag flying over her stern. When she returns to this port, in March next, the Stars and Stripes will wave from her flagstaff and an American skipper will guide her helm.

It will be the same with her sister ship, the City of Poughkeepsie. The latter sailed from Liverpool yesterday and will arrive here on Wednesday next. The company will hold her here until the following Saturday, when she will start for Liverpool in order to have her passengers reach their destinations in time for Christmas. That will be the last voyage of the City of Paris for this year, and when she returns it will be under the American flag.—N. Y. Press, Dec. 8.

The Postoffice Department has issued an order reducing the fee for registering mail matter from ten to eight cents. This change will take effect January 1.

Three Indian boys, under 30 years of age, have been sent to Folsom State Prison for two years for a burglary in Bishop, Inyo county.

NEW TO-DAY.

NOTICE OF PROPOSED GOVERNMENT RESERVATION.

To Whom it May Concern.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN: That by virtue of authority in this respect by the Commissioner of the General Land Office, acting under authority of the Secretary of the Interior, I have made a personal examination of the public lands and drainage basins hereinafter described, with the object of reporting to the Commissioner of the General Land Office whether the whole or any portion thereof should be set apart and reserved under the provisions of section 24 of the Act of Congress approved March 3, 1879, entitled "An Act to Repeal Timber Culture Laws, and for Other Purposes."

After having made such examination, I have decided to so recommend for reservation the public lands embraced within the following boundaries, to-wit:

Commencing at the North West corner of Township 5 South, Range 21 East of Mount Diablo Base and Meridian in State of California, thence due East 48 miles to the North East corner of Township 5 South, Range 25 East; thence south 6 miles to the north east corner of township 6 south, range 25 east; thence south 6 miles to the north east corner of township 7 south, range 25 east; thence south 6 miles to the north east corner of township 8 south, range 25 east; thence south 6 miles to the north east corner of township 9 south, range 25 east; thence south 6 miles to the north east corner of township 10 south, range 25 east; thence south 6 miles to the north east corner of township 11 south, range 25 east; thence south 6 miles to the north east corner of township 12 south, range 25 east; thence south 6 miles to the north east corner of township 13 south, range 25 east; thence south 6 miles to the north east corner of township 14 south, range 25 east; thence south 6 miles to the north east corner of township 15 south, range 25 east; thence south 6 miles to the north east corner of township 16 south, range 25 east; thence south 6 miles to the north east corner of township 17 south, range 25 east; thence south 6 miles to the north east corner of township 18 south, range 25 east; thence south 6 miles to the north east corner of township 19 south, range 25 east; thence south 6 miles to the north east corner of township 20 south, range 25 east; thence south 6 miles to the north east corner of township 21 south, range 25 east; thence south 6 miles to the north east corner of township 22 south, range 25 east; thence south 6 miles to the north east corner of township 23 south, range 25 east; thence south 6 miles to the north east corner of township 24 south, range 25 east; thence south 6 miles to the north east corner of township 25 south, range 25 east; thence south 6 miles to the north east corner of township 26 south, range 25 east; thence south 6 miles to the north east corner of township 27 south, range 25 east; thence south 6 miles to the north east corner of township 28 south, range 25 east; thence south 6 miles to the north east corner of township 29 south, range 25 east; thence south 6 miles to the north east corner of township 30 south, range 25 east; thence south 6 miles to the north east corner of township 31 south, range 25 east; thence south 6 miles to the north east corner of township 32 south, range 25 east; thence south 6 miles to the north east corner of township 33 south, range 25 east; thence south 6 miles to the north east corner of township 34 south, range 25 east; thence south 6 miles to the north east corner of township 35 south, range 25 east; thence south 6 miles to the north east corner of township 36 south, range 25 east; thence south 6 miles to the north east corner of township 37 south, range 25 east; thence south 6 miles to the north east corner of township 38 south, range 25 east; thence south 6 miles to the north east corner of township 39 south, range 25 east; thence south 6 miles to the north east corner of township 40 south, range 25 east; thence south 6 miles to the north east corner of township 41 south, range 25 east; 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GEOMETRIC SNARES.

The Skillfully Constructed Web of the Spider.

How the Delicate Structure is Put Together by the Industrious Insect—Interesting Observations by a Naturalist.

As the webs which my spiders, Lucy and Eliza, says a writer in Longman's Magazine, spun were several times broken or mutilated during the year, either by accident or the gardener, we had plenty of chances for seeing how they proceeded in making them. The lines were in both cases stretched between a white rosebush that climbed up outside of the window and a purple clematis that crept and draped the opposite wall. But Lucy and Eliza didn't live in the web—those were only their snares or traps for prey; each of them had in addition a private home or apartment of her own under shelter of a roseleaf at some distance from the treacherous geometrical structure. The home itself consisted merely of a silken coil, cut out from the roseleaf and connected with the snare by a single stout cord of very solid construction. On this cord the spider kept one foot—I had almost said one hand—constantly fixed. She poised it lightly by its claws, and whenever an insect got entangled in the web a subtle electric message, so to speak, seemed to run along the line to the ever-watchful snare. In one short second Lucy or Eliza, as the case might be, had darted out upon her quarry and was tackling it might and main, according to the particular way its size and strength rendered then and there advisable.

In building their webs, as I have many other small points, Lucy and Eliza showed from the first no inconsiderable personal differences. Lucy began hers by spinning a long line from her spinnerets and letting the wind carry it wherever it would, while Eliza, more architectural in character, preferred to take her lines personally from point to point and see herself to their proper fastening. In either case, however, the first thing done was to stretch some eight to ten stout threads from place to place on the outside of the future web, to act as points d'appui for the remainder of the structure. To these outer threads, which the spiders strengthened so as to bear a considerable strain by doubling and trebling them, other thinner single threads were then carried radially at irregular distances, like the spokes of a wheel, from a point in the center, where they were all made fast and connected together.

As soon as this radiating framework or scaffolding was finished, like the wood on a loom, the industrious craftsman started in the middle and began the task of putting in the cross pieces or weft, which were to complete and bind together the circular pattern. These she wove round and round in a continuous spiral, setting out at the center and keeping on in ever-widening circles, till she arrived at last at the exterior or foundation threads. How she fastened these crosspieces to the rays I could never quite make out, though I often followed the work closely from inside through the pane of glass with a platyscope lens; for, strange to say, the spiders were not in the least disturbed by being watched at their work, and never took the slightest notice of anything that went on at the other side of the window. My impression is, however, that she gummed them together, letting them harden into one as they dried, for the thread itself is always semi-liquid when first exuded.

A SAD EXPERIENCE.

One of the Memorable Incidents in the Early Life of a Celebrated Painter.

Munkacsy, the celebrated painter, endured much suffering and many privations before he attained the proud position he now holds. London Figaro relates a story of an adventure which befell him at the early age of seven. Left an orphan at the time of the Hungarian war, his education was undertaken by his godmother, who owned a tolerably large estate, picturesquely situated among the mountains of Glinia. One evening while most of the villagers were away attending a fete at another village some miles distant, a troop of bandits suddenly made their appearance, bound and gagged all the servants, and best of all of them to death, then laid them all in a row in the dining-room. Little Munkacsy—perhaps on account of his tender years—was spared the beating, but was tied up to one of the servants. In this position he saw his dear godmother dragged about and cruelly beaten by the robbers until she had given up all the money and valuables that were in the house. By the following morning the steward managed to extricate himself from his bonds and released those of the servants who had not died of fright or their wounds. Notwithstanding all the efforts of the doctors who were summoned, Munkacsy's godmother died three days afterward, and thus the poor little fellow was again left without a protector.

The Israelite Crossing of the Red Sea. The New York Observer has the following: There is a little flavor of chestnut in the story, but its revival is timely. A negro preacher, touched with the "higher criticism," once elaborated a new theory of the Exodus, to wit: That the Red sea was frozen over, and so afforded the Israelites a safe passage; but when Pharaoh, with his heavy iron chariots, attempted to cross, he broke through and was drowned. A brother arose and asked an explanation on that "p'int." Said he: "I been studyin' geography, and de geography say dat am de place whar de tropics am, an' de tropics am too hot for frostin'; de pint to be 'splained is 'bout breakin' through de ice." The preacher straightened himself up and said: "Broder, glad you axed dat question, for I give de 'causal to 'splain it. You see de war a great while ago, befo' dere was any tropics, and befo' dere was any tropics."

NEOPIELD'S THEORY OF STORMS.

Suggested to Him by the Vigor of a Gale in New England.

In the year 1881 a severe storm prevailed along the eastern coast, which for many years was known as the "great September gale." It held that title until September, 1880, when another and more remarkable one occurred, which rather disturbed its claim to the honor. It was a little time after this first storm that William C. Redfield, the meteorologist, while making a journey in Massachusetts, was struck by a somewhat curious fact. He noticed that in Massachusetts the trees prostrated by the wind all lay with their heads to the southeast, showing that the gale there was from the northwest, but in Connecticut the trees blown down in the same storm lay head to the northwest, showing that the gale had been a southeasterly one. He ascertained, moreover, that when the wind was blowing southeasterly in Middletown, his home, it was northwesterly at a place not seventy miles from there. It was then that the idea flashed across his mind that the gale was a progressive whirlwind. That was a great thought. It was such a flash of perception as came to Newton when he connected the falling apple with the planets in space. It was such an insight into the meaning of a fact as James Watt had when he saw the possibilities of the force that was rattling the lid of the kettle on his mother's fire. The development of that idea was destined one day to put Redfield in the rank of the great scientific thinkers of his day, says the Popular Science Monthly. He made this storm the basis of his investigations, following his researches into its movement by a careful collection of facts in relation to others like it. For ten years he studied and examined and compared his facts before he published his theory of storms.

BRAVE AND COWARDLY.

Men Who Have Stood the Heat of Battle. But Quailed in the Dark.

"It has been said that all men are cowards in the dark," remarked a member in the presence of a St. Louis Globe-Democrat man, when called upon by the Story Tellers' club of the Laclede to "do his turn." "I am half inclined to believe the saying true. I was in the British army when a young man, and was stationed for some time in India. Our colonel, an old campaigner, who had won his spurs in the Crimea, became involved in a difficulty with a fellow officer and a duel was the result. The colonel, being the challenged party, selected pistols as the weapons and selected that the affair should occur in a dark room. We secured a room twenty feet square, closed every crevice that would admit light, placed our men in corners diagonally opposite and withdrew. Each man was provided with three charges and when these were exhausted we rushed in to gather up the mutilated remains. Each man stood erect and soldier-like in his corner untouched, but directly behind the head of the aggrieved husband were the three bullet holes made by the colonel's pistol. 'How is this?' said a grizzled old major. 'Had you been standing here when those shots were fired you would have been killed.' The culprit was compelled to admit that he had dropped to one knee. 'You are a coward, sir, and unfit for the company of soldiers and gentlemen,' snorted the major. 'Hold on, major,' said the colonel. 'It is a stand-off. While he was on his knees in one corner I was on my stomach in the other.'"

SOME LABOR STATISTICS.

Here Facts That Don't Look Encouraging for Workmen in Germany.

Recently published statistics collected from the trade associations in all parts of the German empire do not convey a very favorable impression of the industrial classes in 1891. The statistics are based on reports from 908 towns and 924 associations, including all together sixteen different branches of trade. In 220 of the towns mentioned the rates of wages were lowered during 1891, in 670 they remained unchanged, and only in seven cases there any rise recorded, although there was an increase in the prices of the ordinary necessities of life. The report of the founders and engine makers shows that out of 306 centers connected with this industry in only two did wages rise, while in seventy-two they fell, and in the rest they remained stationary. The cost of living increased in every case. The depression manifested itself chiefly in the largest centers, such as Berlin, Breslau, Essen, Leipzig, etc., where in some cases work was totally suspended, and in many others men were put on short time. Only one single instance is mentioned in which the discontinuance of work in this branch of industry was caused by disputes between employers and employed. The reports of the other branches of trade, especially the statistics sent by the Miners' association, are still less reassuring. These returns have been collected from every quarter of the empire, and it is unanimously affirmed that the workmen cannot, in existing circumstances, earn enough for the proper support of themselves and their families.

Lofty Lakes.

The most loftily situated lakes are found among the Himalaya mountains in Tibet. Their altitudes do not, however, seem to have been very accurately gauged; for different authorities give widely different figures regarding them. According to some, Lake Manasarovar, one of the sacred lakes of Tibet, is between 19,000 and 20,000 feet above the level of the sea, and if this is so it is undoubtedly the loftiest lake in the world. Two other Tibetan lakes, those of Chalamoo and Surakol, are stated to be 17,000 and 18,400 feet in altitude respectively. For a long time it was supposed that Lake Titicaca, in South America, was the loftiest in the world. It covers about 4,500 square miles, is 924 feet in its greatest depth and is 13,000 feet above the sea. In spite of inexactitude with regard to the measurements of the elevation of the Tibetan lakes, they are, no doubt, considerably higher than this or any others.

FALLIBILITY OF JURIES.

The Men of the South Are Only Ordinary Mortals After All.

Let me say here that I hold judges, and especially the supreme court of the country, in much respect, but I am too familiar with the history of judicial proceedings to regard them with any superstitious reverence, says Charles Sumner, quoted in an exchange. Judges are but men and in all ages have shown a full share of frailty.

Alas! alas! the worst crimes of history have been committed under their sanction. The blood of martyrs and of patriots, crying from the ground, summons them to judgment.

It was a judicial tribunal which condemned Socrates to drink the fatal hemlock and which pushed the Saviour barefoot over the pavements of Jerusalem, bending beneath His cross. It was a judicial tribunal which, against the testimony and entreaties of her father, surrendered the fair Virginia as a slave; which arrested the teachings of the great apostle to the Gentiles and sent him bonds from Jerusalem to Rome; which, in the name of the old religion, adjudged the saints and fathers of the Christian church to death, in all its most dreadful forms, and which afterward, in the name of the new religion, enforced the tortures of the Inquisition, amid the shrieks and agonies of its victims, while it compelled Galileo to declare in solemn denial of the great truth that he had disclosed that the earth did not move around the sun.

It was a judicial tribunal which, in France, during the reign of her monarch, lent itself to be the instrument of every tyranny, as during the brief reign of terror it did not hesitate to stand forth the un pitying accessory of the un pitying guillotine.

Aye, sir, it was a judicial tribunal in England, surrounded by all the forms of law, which sanctioned every despotic caprice of Henry VIII., from the unjust divorce of his queen to the beheading of Sir Thomas Moore; which lighted the fires of persecution, that glowed at Oxford and Smithfield, over the cinders of Latimer, Ridley and John Rogers; which after elaborate argument upheld the fatal tyranny of ship money against the patriotic resistance of Hampden; which, in defiance of justice and humanity, sent Sydney and Russell to the block; which persistently enforced the laws of conformity that our Puritan fathers persistently refused to obey; and which afterward, with Jeffries on the bench, crimsoned the pages of English history with massacre and murder, even with the blood of innocent women.

Aye, sir, it was a judicial tribunal in our country, surrounded by all the forms of law, which hung witches at Salem, which affirmed the constitutionality of the stamp act, while it admonished jurors and the people to obey, and which now in our day has lent its sanction to the unutterable atrocity of the fugitive slave law.

SAHARA THE VAST.

The Greater Part of It Almost Entirely Desolate of Any Kind of Life.

The Sahara begins on the shores of the Atlantic ocean, between the Canaries and Cape Verd, and traverses the whole of north Africa, Arabia and Persia, as far as central Asia. The Mediterranean portion of it may be said roughly to extend between the fifteenth and thirtieth degree of north latitude. This was properly supposed to have been a vast inland sea, but the New York Ledger says this theory was supported by geographical facts wrongly interpreted. It has been abundantly proved by the researches of travelers and geologists that such a sea was neither the cause nor the origin of the Libyan desert. Rainless and sterile regions of this nature are not peculiar to north Africa, but occur in two belts which go round the world in either hemisphere, at about similar distances north and south of the equator. These correspond in locality to the great inland drainage areas from which no water can be discharged into the ocean and which occupy about one-fifth of the total land surface of the globe. The African Sahara is by no means a uniform plain, but forms several distinct basins containing a considerable extent of what may almost be called mountain land. The Hoggar mountains, in the center of the Sahara, are seven thousand feet high, and are covered during three months with snow. The physical character of the region is very varied. In some places, such as Tiout and other oases in or bordering on Morocco, there are well-watered valleys, with fine scenery and almost European vegetation, where the fruits of the north flourish side by side with the palmtree. In others, there are rivers like the Ued Guir, an affluent of the Niger, which the French soldiers, who saw it in 1870, compared to the Loire. Again, as in the bed of the Tied Rir, there is a subterranean river which gives a sufficient supply of water to make a chain of rich and well-peopled oases equal in fertility to some of the finest portions of Algeria. The greater part of Sahara, however, is hard and undulating, cut up by dry water courses and almost entirely without animal or vegetable life.

Deterioration of Rubber.

A rubber expert, who has been making investigations into the cause of the deterioration of rubber, has thrown a new light on the short service derived from rubber hose in railway work. It is found that the copper salts which are used in various stages of the manufacture of certain kinds of rubber goods frequently tend to decompose or harden the material. Metallic copper in contact with rubber causes the oxidation or hardening of the gum, although no appreciable amount of the metal may enter into it; but zinc does not in any way affect it. Oil containing even the smallest quantity of copper is highly injurious to rubber goods, and all oils, except castor oil, exert a detrimental effect—lined oil having also an acid which rots the cloth. One of the evidences of the decomposition of rubber is its strong odor, and when a piece of blotting paper is placed on decaying rubber it becomes discolored by some of the emanations, which does not occur when the rubber is in good condition.

VARIED AND INTERESTING.

A NEW JEMMY often given as a cure for hay fever the smoking of pine needles with tobacco.

The definition of "A Friend" that took the prize in a late contest conducted by a London journal was: "The first person who comes in when the whole world goes out."

Ten laughing jacknaws, when warning his feathered mates that daybreak is at hand utter a cry resembling a group of boys shouting, whooping and laughing in a wild chorus.

Rats in tens of thousands infested the Mercantile club building in St. Louis. All the efforts to rid the house of the rodents proved unsatisfactory, so the building had to be torn down. A rat-proof structure will take its place.

The finest grades of razors are so delicate that the famous Damascus sword blades cannot equal them in texture. It is not generally known that the grain of a Swedish razor is so sensitive that the general direction is changed after a short service.

When the days are hot it is a good thing to have cool nights, but in the change from ninety-four degrees day temperature to seventeen degrees at night, reported from the British Gnatong fort at Sikkim, the garrison has rather "too much of a good thing."

IN MARTIAL ARRAY.

Mrs. E. BURE GIBBS has been elected ensign of her husband's old regiment, the Twenty-third New Jersey.

A recent report shows that of 100,174 regular soldiers in the British army serving at home but 12,898 are natives of Ireland.

The open fireplace in the new public library building at Machias, Me., will be constructed of stones which were used for ballast on board the British war schooner Margaretta, captured by the Americans near Machias during the early part of the revolution.

In the German artillery they have tried a three-legged ladder of steel tubing for enabling the captain of a battery to survey the enemy and direct the fire. The ladder is erected in a wagon and the officer climbs to the top with his field glasses to reconnoiter.

The Swedish government has adopted a new smokeless powder which is said to have the following advantages: It is easy of manufacture, produces no flame and does not heat the rifle. It gives the ball an initial velocity of 2,100 feet with a pressure of 2,300 atmospheres.

UNCLE SAM'S CHILDREN.

SENATOR KENNA, of West Virginia, is an enthusiastic amateur photographer. He has an elaborate studio, with skylight and dark room especially planned, in his new house in Washington.

Much of the money which Mrs. Gen. Custer realized by her seventy-two readings last winter has gone towards educating a young girl whose father died on the same field with her husband.

Mrs. HANNAH HARMON, Brooklyn, Mass., was born the day preceding Washington's retirement from office, and has thus lived under the administration of every president of the United States.

The director of the United States geological survey, Maj. J. W. Powell, did a good deal of his book-studying when a boy driving ox teams fifty or sixty miles to market. Country roads, then as now, afforded a splendid field for geological study.

MUSICAL MELANGE.

A LIST of musical compositions by women from 1675 to 1885 includes fifty-five serious operas, fifty-three comic operas and two oratorios, besides a few cantatas, ballads, etc.

PROF. JOSEPH BARNEY, the musician whom Queen Victoria has knighted, was born in Yorkshire, and like Sir Arthur Sullivan, began life as a choir boy. He is a prolific composer of church and song music.

ACCORDING to a very good authority the middle C is declared to be the note most frequently used in vocalism, as it seems to be the note which best avoids the extremes and is most within the general compass.

SCHUBERT was a rapid worker. He often composed the music of three or four songs in a single night. He died at the early age of thirty-one, yet in his brief life he composed over six hundred songs, several operas, masses, etc.

SIDE REMARKS.

"DOCTOR, what is a good cholera mixture for this time of the year?" "Well, ice cream, watermelon and lager beer will do very well."—Indianapolis Journal.

A NEW SCHOOL.—Mrs. Callie Mell—"Why don't you get your doctor to prescribe a trip somewhere for you?" Miss Akonite—"I can't. He's a homeopath."—Detroit Free Press.

A LITTLE four-year-old was running down hill holding his dress tightly. "Look out, you'll hurt yourself," called his mother. "O no! I'm not afraid. See! I'm holding on to myself."—Wide Awake.

"WHY, hello, old man! I thought you intended to make your European trip last year?" "I did, but my wife found a new fashion in gowns in Paris and hurried home to be the first to wear it."—Indianapolis Journal.

DOINGS IN THE U. S.

The blossom of the wild grape has been adopted as the state flower of Oregon.

A BOSTON dry-goods house has established a gymnasium for the free use of its 1,500 female employees.

MISS CATHERINE V. O'BRYEN, a typewriter of Syracuse, N. Y., can, it is said, write 123 perfect words in one minute. TWENTY thousand hawthorn or May trees have been sent from England to Austin Corbin to plant on his large estate in New Hampshire.

YANKEE thrift was well illustrated the other day by a Hallowell (Me.) excursion party that, by a speculation in blueberries, made more than enough to pay the expenses of the trip.

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On the Eastern Slope of the

Sierra Nevada Mountains, in California

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